

DELAWARE SUPREME COURT

Justices	 Tamika Montgomery-Reeves	 Karen Valihura	 Gary Traynor	 James T. Vaughn	 Collins Seitz
Confidence Score	Indeterminate	Indeterminate	Mild Democrat	Strong Democrat	Strong Democrat
Opinion Partners					
Dissenting Minority					
Determining Majority					
Lone Dissenter					

SUMMARY

- ▶ Number of justices: **5**
- ▶ Number of cases: **435**
- ▶ Percentage of cases with a unanimous ruling: **97.9% (426)**
- ▶ Justice most often writing the majority opinion: **Justice Collins Seitz (105)**
- ▶ Per curiam decisions: **1**
- ▶ Concurring opinions: **3**
- ▶ Justice with most concurring opinions: **Justice James T. Vaughn (3)**
- ▶ Dissenting opinions: **9**
- ▶ Justice with most dissenting opinions: **Justice James T. Vaughn (6)**

COURT CONTENTION

Opinion partners/dissenting minority

In 2020, four cases before the Delaware Supreme Court were decided 3-2. Justices Valihura and Vaughn allied in dissent in two of those cases. In our *Ballotpedia Courts: State Partisanship* study, Justice Valihura recorded an Indeterminate Confidence Score and Justice Vaughn recorded a Strong Democratic Confidence Score.

Determining majority

There were no three justices who were in the majority more than once in the split

cases decided by the Delaware Supreme Court in 2020.

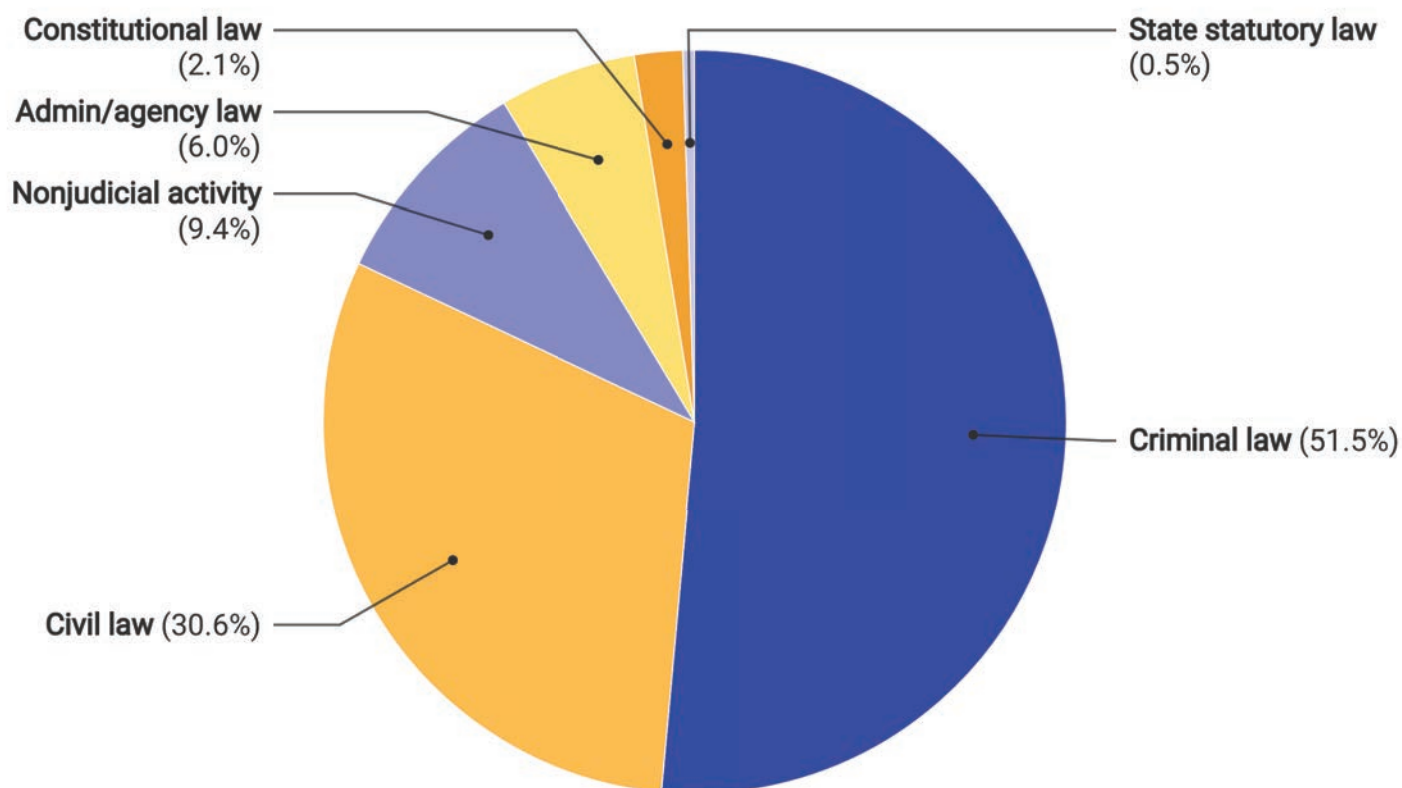
Lone dissenter

There was a lone dissenter in four cases decided by the Delaware Supreme Court in 2020. Justice Vaughn was the lone dissenter in all four of those cases.

COURT JURISDICTION

The Delaware Constitution gives the supreme court appellate jurisdiction in most criminal cases for final judgments that have already been decided by lower courts. It also gives the supreme court discretionary jurisdiction to issue writs of prohibition, quo warranto, certiorari, mandamus and certified questions.

Case types decided by Delaware Supreme Court, 2020



BALLOTPEDIA

The most common case category heard by the Delaware Supreme Court in 2020 was criminal law. Of the 435 cases it heard, 224 were criminal cases, or 51.5 percent of its total caseload for the year. A criminal case involves a final criminal appeal before the court of last resort.

The second most common cases that reached the supreme court were civil cases. A civil case is one that involves a dispute between two parties, one of whom seeks

reparations or damages. The Delaware Supreme Court heard 133 civil cases in 2020, or 30.6 percent of its total caseload for the year.

The third most common cases that reached the court were nonjudicial activity cases. A case is considered nonjudicial activity if it does not involve a formal hearing and discussion before the court. The Delaware Supreme Court heard 41 nonjudicial activity cases in 2020, or 9.4 percent of its total caseload for the year.